

Lockwood-Mathews Mansion, Elm Park
Veterans' Memorial Park (southeast corner
of West Avenue and Butler Street)
Norwalk
Fairfield County
Connecticut

HABS No. CONN-265

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PHOTOGRAPHS
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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. CONN-265

LOCKWOOD-MATHEWS MANSION, ELM PARK

Address: Veterans' Memorial Park (southeast corner of West Avenue and Butler Street) Norwalk, Fairfield County, Connecticut

Present Owner: City of Norwalk

Present Occupant: City of Norwalk Planning Commission, Redevelopment Authority and other civic agencies.

Present Use: The building is presently used for offices and storage, but will soon be demolished.

Brief Statement of Significance: This is a large and interesting example of the mansions built in the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century, and is the largest private house designed by the architect, Detlef Lienau (1818-1887).

PART I. PHYSICAL HISTORY

- A. Original and subsequent owners: Built for LeGrand Lockwood, who died in 1872. Sold to Charles D. Mathews in 1876. In the Mathews family until 1939 when it was leased to the City of Norwalk. Purchased by the city in 1941.
- B. Date of erection: 1864/5 to 1868.
- C. Architect: Detlef Lienau.
- D. Original plans and early photographs: Undated drawings of the house, and early photographs are in the Lienau Collection in the Avery Library, Columbia University, New York. Portfolio IX No. 16 includes: one study, seven working drawings, and one study for the gate lodge.
- E. Sources of information: N. Y. Times, August 5, 1867, p.5, col. 3.
Advertisement in a New York newspaper, March 1873. Lienau, p. 18.
Advertisement, source unknown. City Planning Commission (Lockwood-Mathews Mansion), Norwalk, Conn.
A. J. Bloor, "Annual Address," A.I.A. Proceedings (1876), p.28.
The Reverend Charles M. Scleeck, Norwalk (Norwalk; 1895) pp. 213-214.
Elsie Nicholas Danenberg, The Romance of Norwalk (New York; 1929) p. 314.
Recent clippings, Norwalk Hour. Courtesy Mr. Peter Collins; also report of talk given by the writer to the Kiwanis Club of Norwalk, March 4, 1954, ibid., March 5, pp. 1-2.

Editorial, Mark, August 18, 1956, P. 12. Courtesy Robert Koch.
Ellen W. Kramer, "Detlef Lienau, an Architect of the Brown
Decades," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,
XIV (March, 1955).

Ellen W. Kramer, The Domestic Architecture of Detlef Lienau,
a Conservative Victorian, PhD. dissertation, New York
University (1958).

PART II. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

- A. The following is from a printed advertisement of the house
dated 1874 in the files of the City Planning Commission,
Norwalk:

Elm Park--South Norwalk, Conn.

SITUATION--GROUNDS, &C

Elm Park is situated on Long Island sound, about midway between the
villages of Norwalk and South Norwalk, three-fourths of a mile from
each. The grounds consist of about 25 acres, with a front on West
avenue of about 1,200 feet. This front, and 150 feet on the south
side, is inclosed with an ornamental wrought-iron fence four feet high,
set upon a cut granite base. Remaining sides are inclosed as follows:
south side, from end of iron fence to Pine Island Cemetery, 650 feet,
wire fence; adjoining cemetery, 825 feet, tight board fence; on east
side, from cemetery to shop, 400 feet, stone wall laid in cement, four
feet high, surmounted by a picket fence of wood, three feet high; from
the shop to the angle on Butler street, 600 feet, granite wall, cut
face, laid in cement and covered with cut coping of granite; the top
of this wall is nine feet above garden; from Butler street to West
avenue, 600 feet of tight board fence.

The grounds are not fully laid out, but the drives shown on the map
are well-constructed and in good condition. The garden, containing
about two acres, is laid out in squares with graveled walks and box
borders, and is well stocked with choice varieties of hardy fruit trees.

Adjoining the garden is a grapery and potting house, 30 feet by 190
feet, a hot house for plants, 63 feet by 33 feet, a forcing house for
plants, 16 feet by 80 feet, and a sprouting house, 43 feet by 67 feet.
All theset [sic] buildings are constructed in the most perfect manner.

The main entrance to the grounds [sic] is from West avenue through
ornamental wrought-iron gates hung upon cut granite columns. The
lodge at the gate, 25-1/2 feet by 37 feet, is built in the Rural Gothic
style, of coursed granite, rock face. It is one and one-half story,
with cellar under whole building. The principal floor contains three
large rooms and butler's pantry. Second floor three large and one
small chamber and bath room and water-closet.

The principal and second floors are all finished in hard wood oiled
and polished, and the ceilings and side walls are oil frescoed in taste-
ful manner. Near the lodge is a building, 13 feet by 20 feet, built
of granite rubble and fitted up as a summer kitchen for lodge.

MANSION, BUILDINGS, &C.

The mansion is built of broken ashlar of smooth cut granite. The carriage-way leads through a port cochere of carved granite. The front door opening from this is of black walnut, carved and moulded and has bronze trimmings.

The vestibule floor laid in pattern with foreign marble, wainscot of American black walnut with English walnut panels, highly polished, the ceiling of plaster is groined, and together with the side walls is oil frescoed.

The hall floor laid in pattern with Italian marble, wainscot and woodwork is of American and English walnut, with panels of Italian marble, the ceiling is of plaster paneled and is supported upon polished columns of Italian marble with porphyry bases, the ceiling and side walls are oil frescoed, the mantel is of black walnut, carved and inlaid, and the fire place is of Italian marble.

The Rotunda floor is parquetry formed of five different woods laid in geometrical pattern, wainscot and other woodwork is of American and English walnut with polished panels and hand carved mouldings, the mantel is of walnut carved and inlaid with box wood, and the fire place is of Italian marble.

A gallery runs around the rotunda at the level of the second floor, the railing of this gallery is formed of alternate balusters of carved and inlaid black walnut, and of bronze, the rail is of black walnut and is surmounted with light rails covered with red plush supported in gilded standards, the front of the gallery is paneled to match the wainscot of first floor. Gallery floor is laid with black walnut and ash, in alternate strips. The ceiling of the rotunda is arched forming a dome in the center of which at a height of forty-one and a half feet from the principal floor is a sky light of ground glass. The dome and side walls are oil frescoed.

The library floor is parquetry of five different woods laid in geometrical pattern, the wainscot and woodwork is of American and English walnut with polished steel trimmings, the mantel is of carved and moulded walnut, the ceiling is paneled with black walnut with plaster centers frescoed, the cornice is of walnut and frescoed plaster. The side walls are richly papered. The conservatory opens from the library. The floor is laid with encaustic tile, and the covering is of stained glass. The closet opening from the library is fitted with book-cases of black walnut.

The music room--the floor is of white pine and requires a carpet. The woodwork is of bird's eye maple with rosewood mouldings, and is inlaid in delicate pattern with ebony and boxwood. The doors have ebony panels inlaid with boxwood in pattern and figures. The mouldings are lacquered and gilded. The mantel and fire place are of Italian statuary marble, carved. The ceiling is paneled and, together with the cornice and side walls, is beautifully frescoed in oil.

The drawing room--the floor requires a carpet. The woodwork is of rosewood inlaid with boxwood, ebony and cedar of Lebanon, in designs. The mouldings are hand carved and gilded. The doors are of rosewood inlaid same as other woodwork, and the panels are ornamented with bronze medallions. The centerpiece of the ceiling is an oil painting 12 feet by 16 feet on canvas by Galland. The rest of the ceiling is paneled and, together with the cornice and side walls, is elegantly frescoed.

The card room opens from the drawing room. The floor requires a carpet. The wainscot and woodwork are of bird's eye maple with boxwood panels and exquisite ebony marquetry. The mouldings are of mahogany and Spanish cedar, and the base-board of English walnut. The mantel is of wood, carved and moulded to match woodwork. The ceiling is arched, paneled and frescoed in artistic representations of birds and flowers. The side walls are ornamented with fine frescoes representing music, painting and poetry.

The dining room floor requires a carpet. The wainscot and woodwork are of oak paneled with cedar of Lebanon and with mouldings of American black walnut. The mantel is of oak carved and moulded and supported on figures of carved oak. There are three large mirrors in this room, one over the mantel and one on each side of the bay-window. The ceiling is paneled and frescoed, as are the cornice and side walls.

Opening from the dining-room is a fire and burglar proof vault for silver. In two corners of the dining room are stationary buffets of carved and inlaid oak. From the dining-room through a hall is the butler's pantry, kitchen pantry, kitchen laundry, etc. All these are fitted up with hard wood floors, and woodwork of yellow pine and walnut and have all the modern conveniences. The walls and ceilings are painted.

The billiard rooms have parquetry floors of five different woods, wainscot and woodwork of oak with ash panels and black walnut mouldings, the mantel of wood carved and moulded to match the woodwork, the ceilings are paneled and with the cornices and side walls are oil frescoed. The wash-room opening from billiard room is fitted up in hard wood in best style.

The main staircase has treads and risers of black walnut, carved and inlaid black walnut newel posts, rail and balusters of American black walnut carved and inlaid with boxwood and English walnut, the strings have panels of English walnut inlaid with box wood and ebony. The wainscot on stair landing and from there to second floor, is of American Black walnut with English walnut panels inlaid with box wood and ebony.

Servants' staircase has treads and risers of oak and sawed scroll balustrade of oak with black walnut rail, wainscot to match balustrade.

The height of ceilings on principal floor is fifteen feet.

The floor of hall around gallery on second floor is of yellow pine and black walnut laid in alternate strips, the woodwork is of English walnut, the walls and ceilings are frescoed.

Chamber "A" and dressing-room "B", woodwork is red cedar with rosewood mouldings and the doors are inlaid with cedar of Lebanon and walnut. In the dressing-room is a wood mantel carved and moulded to match the woodwork, also a wash-stand with Italian marble slab. Opening from the dressing-room is a bath-room and water closet, fitted up in the best style. Ceilings and side walls of all these rooms are oil frescoed.

Chamber "C" woodwork of birdseye maple with rosewood mouldings, mantel of Italian marble carved and inlaid, the ceiling paneled and together with the cornice and side walls oil frescoed.

The small room in tower opening from this chamber is fitted up in oak and black walnut, the ceiling is arched and with the side walls is beautifully frescoed. The bath-room opening from chamber "C" has floor and woodwork of hard wood, and is furnished with wash-stand, Italian marble slab, water-closet and bath-tub all fitted up in best style.

Chamber "D" woodwork is of oak with lacquered and gilded moulding, the door panels are of oak inlaid with box wood and ebony, mantel of wood carved and moulded to match woodwork, and with porphyry panels and fire place.

Chamber "E" woodwork is of oak and cherry mantel of wood paneled and moulded to match, washstand with Italian marble slab, encased in oak, ceiling, cornice and side walls oil frescoed.

Chamber "F," woodwork is of oak and black walnut, mantel of wood carved and moulded to correspond with other woodwork, wash-stand has Italian/sic/ marble slab. Ceiling, cornice and side walls all oil frescoed.

Chambers "G," "H" and "I," woodwork is of red cedar with lacquered mouldings, the mantels are wood carved and moulded: ceilings, cornices and side walls are frescoed in oil. The bath-room opening from chamber "C," has hard wood floor, woodwork of red cedar, pine and black walnut, and is furnished with wash-stand, Italian marble slab, water-closet and bath-tub. The dressing-room opening from chamber "H," is fitted up in hard wood, wash-stand, marble slab in end, and closets and drawers on side.

Chamber "K," and the suite of rooms connected with it from "L" to "Q" inclusive, are fitted up in pine, grained and varnished. The mantels are of hard wood, carved and moulded, ceiling and side walls are oil frescoed. The bath-room is fitted with wash-stand and bath-tub.

The ceilings on second floor are 12 feet high.

The second and third floors of servants' quarters are fitted up in pine with mahogany mouldings. The walls are painted and the mantels are of marble.

The stair case from second to third floor is same as back stairs from principal to second floor.

The third floor, main building, is fitted up throughout in pine with mahogany moulding. All wash-stands have marble slabs and, together with the bath-tubs, etc., are fitted up in best manner. The mantels are all of marble.

The attic in roof is all plastered and painted, but is not divided into rooms. There is a cellar under the whole building, containing a bowling alley, a fire and burglar proof vault, wine cellar, coal bins, etc.

There is an electric burglar alarm connected with all the exterior doors and windows on principal and second floors. It has two indicators, one at the door of chamber "C" on second floor, and one at end of the hall on second floor of servants' quarters. There is an annunciator at the kitchen door with 23 bells connecting with principal rooms.

There is an elevating lift running from principal to third floor.

The windows throughout building are fitted with inside folding blinds to match woodwork.

All glass throughout building is French plate. Roof of building is covered with black slate and tin.

The building is heated by steam. Gold's patent indirect radiation. The cold air is brought into the cellar, is there passed over steam radiators and then distributed over the house through pipes controlled by registers in each room.

There are four boilers for heating located in cellar.

The house throughout is fitted with gas, as are all the other buildings on the premises, and all the driveways through the grounds are lighted by lamps.

There is a reservoir belonging to the establishment, capable of storing 20,000 gallons of water. It is situated about one-half mile from the house and is connected with it by a three inch cast iron pipe.

All bath-tubs and wash-stands are supplied with hot and cold water, and each wash-stand has in addition a drinking fountain.

There is a distributing tank in the attic, with a capacity of 2,000 gallons. The water from the main flows into this tank, and is then distributed over the house.

All the buildings on the premises are supplied with water.

All materials in the building are the very best and the workmanship is absolutely perfect.

The outbuildings on the place are extensive, comprising the carriage house 50 feet by 70 feet, two story with standing shed 25 feet by 30 feet stable of coursed granite. It contains stalls for eight horses, carriage and harness rooms, granary and hay loft, and sleeping-room for coachman. It is all fitted up in best manner in hard wood. The farm stable and gardener's cottage in one building, 35 feet by 56 feet, is of wood, two stories, with cow-house underneath. The shop, two story, 24 feet by 30 feet, is built of granite. The farm cottage is built of wood, 26 feet by 36 feet, two story, with cellar under whole building. The ice-house, 30 feet by 45 feet, is of wood.

B. The following is extracted from Ellen W. Kramer, The Domestic Architecture of Detlef Lienau, a Conservative Victorian, pp. 183-196:

A Country Estate:

Lockwood Mansion, South Norwalk, Connecticut, c. 1864-68

Introduction

...

LeGrand Lockwood (1820-72)¹ for whom the house was built, was a native son of Norwalk whose family had been associated with the development of the town since 1645. He was the head of one of Wall Street's best known and most reputable brokerage concerns. Lockwood had made a fortune in stocks and government bonds during the Civil War; he sunk part of these funds into the purchase of land and the construction of his million dollar mansion in South Norwalk. From there he could easily keep in touch with his New York office, the Stock Exchange, and the several other enterprises in which he had an interest. Lockwood was active in the development of early car lines in Norwalk (1862) and New York; he was on the board of several railroad companies and the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.² The tracks of the Danbury Norwalk Railroad, of which he was Vice President, ran directly to the east of his property. It was he who floated a \$2,000,000 bond issue for the New York, New Haven and Hartford line at a crucial moment of its history. In short, LeGrand Lockwood was one of a new breed of men who emerged in this period--the Wall Street tycoon and railroad man. He was Norwalk's first millionaire and, while he was not in the same category as Cornelius Vanderbilt, he possessed certain qualities which the elder

man lacked. Lockwood was, according to all accounts, a man of considerable personal charm, well liked by all who knew him; he was generous, public spirited and had the reputation of being a man of his word--he was a gentleman. Unlike Jay Cooke, the famous financier of the Civil War to whom he was distantly related, Lockwood had enjoyed the benefits of a good education, extensive travel abroad, and cultivated the role of a lover and patron of the arts and sciences.³

Both as Norwalk's first millionaire and as a man of "taste," Lockwood must have felt a certain obligation, architecturally speaking, towards the town of his birth. Quite understandably, the house Lienau designed for him was no picturesque cottage retreat. It was a country mansion in the grand manner, destined to be the showplace of the community. Particular mention was made of the house in an article in the New York Times of August 5, 1867, describing the fine residences of Norwalk:

One of these, now in the course of erection by Mr. Le Grand Lockwood...will cost, with the grounds, nearly two millions of dollars, and when completed, will stand with scarcely a rival in the United States. The designs were furnished by an eminent European architect, who has planned many of the palatial residences beyond the great pond /sic/ ⁴

The mistaken attribution to Lienau of the design of great mansions abroad is easily explained by the conscious aping of the French chateau tradition in the Lockwood mansion, a point to which we shall return. The passage is quoted here primarily for two reasons: one, it was useful in dating the house (the sources are contradictory and the Lienau drawings at Avery Library⁵ are undated); two, for its statement regarding the cost and relative quality of the house.

First, the date of the mansion. We know that Lockwood purchased the most important parcels of land which constituted Elm Park, as the estate was called, between November 1863 and March of the following year, rounding it out with purchases in 1865.⁶ We may assume that the plans for the building were either furnished before Lienau's trip to Europe in the spring of 1864 (one writer maintains that construction began that spring)⁷ or following his return, in which case the start of construction would probably have been delayed until the spring of 1865. According to tradition,⁸ the Lockwoods occupied the gate lodge while awaiting completion of the mansion. This is substantiated by the listing of LeGrand Lockwood, Jr., in Connecticut in the New York directories of 1866/67. According to the same source, LeGrand Lockwood, Sr., moved from New York to Connecticut only in 1863, thus corroborating the Times article above which described the house as "in the course of erection" the summer before. A date of 1864/65 to 1868 would therefore cover the actual dates of construction of the various buildings on the estate, gate lodge, gardener's cottage, main house, stables, carriage house, greenhouses, etc. If this seems a long time, we should remember that much of the material for house was imported from Europe;

.....

. . . , Lockwood is supposed to have travelled far and wide in search of materials for his house. Egyptian porphyry, Florentine marble carved to order in Italy, the rarest and best of domestic and imported woods beautifully inlaid, huge mantels rich with carving--these were mere details of interior decoration which indicate the recherche quality of planning and design which both the client and architect put into the house. Consider, moreover, that the house contained some nineteen bedrooms (including servants' rooms) on the second floor alone, that it had fourteen bathrooms and twelve water closets (unheard of in those days even for a family with a half dozen children!), a picture gallery, not one but two connecting billiard rooms, a private theatre in the attic and a bowling alley in the basement. This descendant of the Puritans was assuredly no ascetic, judging by the capacity of the wine cellar! The house was heated by two huge marine boilers in the basement, now walled up; water was supplied by a private spring located at some distance from the house and piped into a 2,000 gallon tank on the fourth story of the house. An annunciator at the kitchen door had twenty-three bells connecting with all the principal rooms. There was a burglar alarm connected to every window and door on the first two floors and a fire and burglar proof vault for silver next to the dining room.⁹

Description and Analysis

This fabulous house, described by one writer as a "sumptuous and striking example of architectural invention,"¹⁰ was built like a fortress. The outer walls rest on concrete foundations three feet thick; the basement, entirely vaulted with brick arches, recalls North German traditions which Lienau also used in the house he built for his brother Michael in 1872 in Utersen¹¹ and later advocated as an excellent method of fire proofing.¹² The walls were double; The outer of granite slabs twenty inches thick, the inner of eight inch thick brick with an air chamber of four inches between. The exterior granite facing, finely cut, here and there shows signs of weathering. A rather ponderous porte cochère with LeGrand's initials worked into the keystone in heraldic fashion¹³ (an interesting detail which may be seen in Lienau's elevation drawing [Fig. 73]) leads into the house. The mansion then builds up gradually behind low flanking wings¹⁴ and high central gable to a mansard roof finished off with an iron balustrade of delicate Neo-Grec design. The overall impression is decidedly reminiscent of the French Renaissance chateau tradition which both Lienau and his client must have known at first hand and which was promoted by recent French publications¹⁵ and restoration projects. . . .

A preliminary study for the house, to modern eyes a far better design than the one finally adopted, makes clear the close relationship to French tradition. The mansard roofs, dormer windows placed immediately above the cornice line, the emphasis upon corner quoining, the tall chimneys decorated with Lienau's favorite bull's eye panels (replaced in the executed design by banded chimneys), the effort to make a balanced composition in spite of unavoidable asymmetries--these are all obviously French in origin. In the working drawings certain significant changes were made, presumably at Lockwood's request: note the raising of the mansard to make room for a fourth

story, the elaboration of the pediments capping the second story dormers and the increased use of incised ornamentation on the dormers and porte cochere. These changes bring to the building a certain top-heaviness--less readily apparent in photographs than in the actual building--and a fussy quality which relates it more closely to High Victorian taste. The conflict between Lockwood's tendencies toward monumentalization and display and Lienau's simpler, more classical tendencies results in a building which cannot be cited as an altogether successful example of eclectic design. There is a certain overelaboration, a coarseness in detailing (also apparent in the interior), a lack of subordination of parts to the whole which again runs counter to modern critical standards, but was typical of the aesthetic of its own period. One unusual motif, for which no exact parallels can be found, deserves mention: the introduction of a strongly projecting horizontal cornice in the gable immediately above the second story window. This extremely mannerist device, whereby the pedimental scrollwork is disengaged completely from the window of which it is ostensibly a part, repeated in other parts of the house and in the gardener's cottage, had been introduced by Lienau years earlier in the Kane villa.¹⁶ Similar motifs are found occasionally in French 17th century work where, however, they are still used functionally.¹⁷ One wonders if the segmentalization of the gable, reflected also in the transformation of the functional window lintel into a decorative horizontal band joining with the surround, may not ultimately reflect the influence of traditional North European (particularly North German and Danish) gable treatments.

Other features of the exterior deserve mention as interesting examples of the amalgum of European and American traditions. The porch (Fig. 74) encircling the southern side of the mansion is one of its most effective features and stems, of course, from American, not French, traditions. The charming turret capping the octagonal oriel at the southeast corner may call to mind contemporary published French work where, however, even in Gothicizing houses, turrets were generally used in pairs to bring symmetry and focus to the facade rather than as a single picturesque accent as in the Norwalk house.¹⁸ In this respect Lienau again is closer to American traditions of the 1840s and 50s best illustrated by A. J. Davis' work, though one can also point to early French traditions of asymmetry, as in the turreted chateaux published by Victor Petit in Châteaux de France du XVe et XVIe siècles (1855).

In plan (Fig. 75) the house represents an interesting compromise between a strongly axial centralized scheme and centrifugal tendencies toward spatial expansion and picturesque irregularity. The core of the house is a large octagonal hall or rotunda, roofed over by a double lantern, from which the rooms radiate. This is a completely traditional scheme, known to all students of Serlio and Palladio.¹⁹ Developed very successfully in France from the 17th century on in the chateaux and mansions of the king and the nobility and in a number of English great houses,²⁰ this type of plan had been popular in the United States from the early Republic on. The rotunda plan had been a favorite of Jefferson;²¹ Latrobe built a number of such houses;²²

Fiske Kimball noted that particularly after 1830 many Greek Revival houses were built around a central rotunda or saloon of circular or polygonal shape.²³ In the 1850s and 60s the central octagonal hall usually took one of two forms: it either was an elongated rectangle with squared off corners, as in examples in Lefever's Architectural Instructor and Vaux's Villas and Cottages,²⁴ or it was conceived as a true octagon, as in two examples by Sloan, one by Holly and one by Hobbs, a Philadelphia architect.²⁵ One should note that none of these plans, with the exception of Hobbs' project, an ambitious \$150,000 scheme, even remotely approached the scale of the Lockwood rotunda, whose dimensions (32 x 38 feet) exactly corresponded to those of Palladio's Villa Capra (35 x 35 feet). In the Norwalk house the rotunda, preceded by an impressive marble vestibule and flanked to the left by a grand staircase, has something of the flavor of a public hall in a municipal building, as is apparent from a photograph of the interior (Fig. 76). It is big, impressive, grand--but hardly cosy in the sense of the living hall type plan developed in the 70s. Perhaps the only private house with central rotunda in this country up to this time which at all approaches the scale of the Lockwood example is Stevens' Castle, built considerably earlier, which has been mentioned in connection with the Cottenet villa.²⁶ While the Palladian tradition and local American variations on the rotunda theme are certainly most important for furnishing us with the immediate background of the Lockwood plan, it is interesting to note that the large open central space was also a recurrent feature of contemporary North German house plans. Usually square or rectangular, but occasionally octagonal, the central gallery or hall was often as large or larger than the reception and family rooms,²⁷ as is the case here also. Lienau used a large rectangular gallery in Duneck, his brother's house in Utersen (Fig. 82), but again, none of the German examples compares in scale with Elm Park. For comparable dimensions we have to look elsewhere, to the large Italian villas published by Petit in his Villas cosmopolites.²⁸

If the plan is vaguely Palladian, one should note that Lienau intentionally broke with the tradition of perfect symmetry and balance associated with this concept. The basic rectangular outline, usually rigidly maintained in German examples, is repeatedly broken by polygonal excrescences, expressed in bay windows, the corner turret, the encircling veranda, the conservatory, etc. The sense of space as a self contained unit, of symmetry and balance, is destroyed. In its place there is substituted a conception of space as something palpably real, flowing from one room to the next. Openings between rooms were made much wider than usual. On the right side of the plan the enfilade of library, music room and parlor provided an uninterrupted vista of eighty-two feet in length when the sliding doors, over eight feet wide, were open. The fireplace seen in the right side of the court in the plan also deserves special comment. It has a low grate; the mantel is surmounted by a large piece of lightly frosted glass on which is delicately etched a classicistic flying female figure (Pomona), and through which one can almost see into the music room from the central court.²⁹

Interiors such as those of the Lockwood mansion provide palpable proof that the extravagant living standards we generally associate with the 80s and 90s were merely refinements of tastes acquired much earlier. The vestibule sets the tone. It is large, cold and impressive; the floor is marble, it has corner niches for marble statues³⁰ and the ceiling, originally frescoed, is supported by four columns of highly polished heavily mottled Florentine marble on porphyry bases. A heavy black walnut mantel with a marble fireplace, on the left, reaches almost to the ceiling. This vestibule leads into the monumental central court (Fig. 76) whose plan has already been discussed; its parquet floor, now covered over, was inlaid with five different kinds of wood in an intricate abstract design oddly reminiscent of linoleum patterns of the 1920s and 30s. The grand staircase to the left (Fig. 77), whose dramatic sweep was perhaps unparalleled in American domestic architecture of the period,³¹ was executed in black walnut and rosewood inlaid with satinwood. It leads up to the second story gallery which encircles the court and affords easy access to all the bedroom suites; the balusters of the gallery, before alterations made by the second owner of the house, were black walnut and bronze; the railing was covered with scarlet plush supported by gilded standards.

Returning to the ground floor, the rooms, counterclockwise, were as follows: first a large and pleasant library in black walnut opening onto a tiled conservatory; then the music room (Fig. 78), its woodwork of birds-eye maple and rosewood, with frescoed ceilings and side walls, gilded moldings, elaborately draped windows, French furniture, wonderful plush ottoman and fancy candelabra; finally the grand salon (Fig. 79), with woodwork of rosewood inlaid with boxwood, ebony and Lebanon cedar, gilded moldings, frescoed ceiling, Louis XV furniture, and charming little oriel in the turret which served as a card room. The dining room, in the center of the house directly opposite the entrance, is with the library the best preserved room on the ground floor. Here we can still see the dark oak, walnut and brazilwood wainscotting, the huge mantels and sideboards so popular before the Eastlakean Revolution, "inconceivably ponderous monuments to stability."³² In sum, the interiors of the Lockwood mansion are probably the finest and the best preserved of their kind in the United States.³³ Each of the upstairs bedrooms was originally decorated and frescoed in a different style (e.g., Louis XV, Moorish, etc.). All the bedroom suites were furnished with elaborate dressing rooms fitted out "with every convenience that ingenuity can suggest or the most generous expenditure procure."³⁴ Even the bathroom fixtures are interesting: each washstand--of marble, of course--had its own drinking fountain in addition to hot and cold running water. Returning downstairs once again, note to the left of the plan the two billiard rooms, forty-five feet in length, with adjoining wash room and a "lunch room" located under the grand staircase. Incidentally, the kitchen facilities in the rear were evidently extended in the course of construction: The pantry and laundry wing, polygonal in shape and capped on the exterior by a picturesque

turret, were not a feature of the original working drawings.

. . . On September 24, 1869, "Black Friday," the bottom dropped out of the market. Lockwood, along with many others, was ruined. But Monday morning, so the story goes, he was back in Wall Street. The first thing he did was turn over his house, which he owned free and clear, to his creditors. A few months later he was able to regain title to Elm Park which he then mortgaged heavily--for some \$400,000--to the Lake Shore Railroad of which he was very conveniently the Treasurer. But legend says that he never really got over Black Friday. He died of pneumonia on February 24, 1872. The New York Stock Exchange closed for the day of his funeral.³⁵

Later History of the Mansion

In 1873, following the panic of that year, the house with its thirty-four acres of land was put up for sale (as was also Cooke's Ogontz) and advertised as "the perfect home for a gentleman of taste, culture, and fortune, who is able to avail himself of this singular opportunity to obtain a princely mansion at the cost of a moderate establishment."³⁶ After a lengthy description the advertisement concluded that it was "perhaps, the most perfect and elegant mansion in America." The estate, in addition to the house, contained a gate lodge, gardener's cottage, stables and stalls for twelve horses, carriage house for twenty vehicles, an ice house, barn, greenhouses and extensive gardens. But this was 1873... The house remained on the market for three years before it found a buyer in the person of Charles D. Mathews, carbonated beverage king of New York, who purchased it for a fraction of its original cost (sums of \$60,000 and \$90,000 are variously reported). The estate remained in the hands of the Mathews family³⁷ until 1939 when it was leased to the City of Norwalk and finally purchased by the city in 1941 for \$175,000 for a park and conversion to civic use.³⁸ In September 1951 the mansion was the scene of Norwalk's Tricentennial celebration. Recently the mansion was threatened by the new Connecticut Thoroughway; the pike was rerouted and demolition averted through joint action of the D.A.R., the Society for the Preservation of the Antiquities of Norwalk, and the former mayor of Norwalk, Mr. Irving C. Freese. Although no action has yet been taken, plans are still under consideration for the conversion of the building to a city hall or community center for the city of Norwalk.³⁹

FOOTNOTES

¹See Frederick A. Holden and E. Dunbar Lockwood, Descendants of Robert Lockwood: Colonial and Revolutionary History of the Lockwood Family in America From A.D. 1630, Philadelphia, 1889, I, 360, II, 489-93.

For information of a personal nature, I am indebted to a granddaughter, Hilda Lockwood (Mrs. John F.) O'Brien of New York and Franconia, N.H. (letter of Oct. 3, 1952).

²For his testimony in the notorious Crédit Mobilier scandal, see Myers, History of the Great American Fortunes, pp. 476-77.

³He financed Dr. Isaac I. Hayes' third expedition to the Arctic (1869), when he was accompanied by the marine painter, William Bradford. The LeGrand Lockwood Prize at Dartmouth College, awarded for excellence in debating, was established by him.

⁴P. 5, col. 3.

⁵Portfolio IX, No. 16, consisting of one study, seven working drawings and a study for the gate lodge.

⁶The Reverend Charles M. Selleck, Norwalk, Norwalk, Connecticut, 1895, n. 1, pp. 213-14; Elsie Nicholas Danenberg, The Romance of Norwalk, New York, 1929, p. 314. I am also indebted to Mr. Peter Collins, architect, of Norwalk, for information regarding the house culled from clippings from the Norwalk Hour.

⁷Danenberg, p. 314.

⁸Many legends have grown up about the house and its owner, some of which have been told to me by Mrs. Dorothy B. Chase of Norwalk (Chairman of the Committee for Norwalk's Tricentennial Celebration, 1951), who conducted me through the house in 1952, and by Thomas B. Goggins, employed from 1897 on by the Mathews family, second owners of the house.

⁹Much of my information is derived from advertisements for the mansion when it was put up for sale in 1873. A copy of one such ad from a New York newspaper of March, 1873, is in Lienau, "Biography; Memorabilia," p. 18; another, a description and plans of "Elm Park" made by Weston's in 1874, is in the possession of the City Planning Commission, of which photostats were kindly forwarded to me by Mr. Shapiro, formerly Chairman of the Commission.

¹⁰Selleck, p. 214.

¹¹Post, p. 196

¹²Post, p. 256 and n. 2.

¹³The yearning for aristocratic distinction, reflected in architecture in the adoption of the mansard roof (see ante, p. 104) and the Newport cottages, found one of its most direct expressions in the ever increasing number of establishments on Broadway devoted exclusively to furnishing impressive genealogies and family crests to the wealthy middle class. For the 1850s see Chambers (Things as They Are in America, p. 179) and Grattan (Civilized America, I, 208). Browne's chapter, "Heraldry on the Hudson," in The Great Metropolis (pp. 596 ff.)

indicates how important this fad had become by the later 60s. This same period saw the adoption of other social patterns based on those of the aristocracy, already mentioned in connection with Colonel DeLancey Kane and the Coaching Club (p. 135, N.1). Note too the beginning of the trend for daughters of American millionaires to marry into the ranks of the nobility abroad, of which the most conspicuous example was that of Jennie, Larry Jerome's daughter, to Lord Randolph Churchill. Mary Mason Jones' daughter, also known as Mary Mason Jones (1820-1907) had anticipated this trend when she married Régis Denis deKeredern, Baron deTrobriand, afterwards Conte de Trobriand, and later a Major General in the U.S. Army.

¹⁴The effect of an event-corps recalls occasional French practice, as in an hôtel rue d'Amsterdam (Calliat, Parallèle, II, pl. 97), where it is used for stables and service quarters.

¹⁵E.g., Petit, Châteaux de France... [1855], and slightly later, Claude Sauvageot, Palais, châteaux, hôtels, et maisons de France du XVe au XVIIIe siècle, Paris, 1867, in 4 vols.

¹⁶Particularly noticeable in the side elevations.

¹⁷E.g., Camille Martin, La Renaissance en France Paris [c1913-c1921], Vol. I, pls. XC and passim.

¹⁸Of., Lessus' hôtel avenue Montaigne #24 (Adams, Recueil, pls. 30, 31, 41, [plan]); Calliat, Parallèle, I, pls. 104-105; Daly, L'Architecture privée au XIXe siècle sous Napoleon III Paris, 1864 (1st ed. of this important work), II, villa suburbaine 1ère classe, Ex. A¹, pls. 2, 3, 4, etc; A. Normand, Château of Liencourt, Moniteur des architectes, Vol. III (1868), facade pls. 176-77, plan pl. 171.

¹⁹Of., Sebastiano Serlio, Tutte l'opere d'architettura Venice 1584, VII, p. 5, and passim; Bennister Fletcher's drawings of Palladio's Villa Capra, Vicenza, gives its dimensions in English feet (A History of Architecture 13th ed., New York, 1946, p. 661).

²⁰Mansart's Château de Marly (Hauteceur, II², 573, Fig.449) was the prototype for most later variants which, according to Hauteceur, enjoyed widespread popularity at the end of the Ancien Régime (IV, 373-74, and Figs. 216, 217, 219, 220). For England see e.g., Georgina Masson, "Four Palladian Villas," Country Life, CVII² (June 2, 1950), 1634-38.

²¹See his rotunda projects for the Government House, Richmond, and his anonymous competition drawing for the White House, Fiske Kimball, Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and Early Republic, p. 174, and Fig. 131, p. 171.

²²E.g., Pope house, Lexington, Kentucky, the Tayloe project, Washington, etc., in Hamlin, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, New York, 1955, pp. 102-10, Figs. 7, 8, 10.

²³Page 175.

²⁴Lafever, Mansion No. 3, pl. XCII; Vaux, Rogers house, Design No. 11 (1857 ed.) and No. 13 (1864 ed.).

²⁵Sloan, Model Architect, Vol. I, Design IX, pl. XXXVI, and Homestead Architecture, Philadelphia, 1867, Design XXXIV, opposite p. 253; Holly, Design 13, opposite p. 81; Isaac H. Hobbs and Son, Hobbs' Architecture . . . , Philadelphia, 1873, Design LXXI, p. 163 (Design LXX, p. 161 in 1876 ed.).

²⁶Cf. ante, p. 119. For the plan, see Villas on the Hudson, pl. [7].

²⁷Cf. Hamburg, Architekten- und Ingenieur-Verein, Hamburg's Privatbauten, Hamburg, 1877, pls. II (1872), XIV (1858), XX (1876), XXIII-IV, especially Halle's villa for S. Löwenstein (1873), XXIX (1866), XXXIX (1874), LV (1876); also pls. L (1856) and XX (1876), examples with octagonal courts. Carl Weichert, Das Stadthaus und die Villa . . . , 2d ed., Weimar, 1884, passim, and pls. XXXVI, XXXVII.

²⁸E.g., pl. 29, and passim.

²⁹Robert Koch, whose study of Louis Comfort Tiffany (unpubl. diss., Yale University, 1957) has made him thoroughly familiar with interiors of this period, knows of no earlier example of this type of unusual arrangement, though frosted glass doors and windows may be found between rooms in some Greek Revival houses; after 1870 painted glass screens became very popular (see Harper's, LXIX [1869], 655 ff.). Koch, letter of April 11, 1957.

³⁰This type of formal vestibule is often seen in French early 18th century architecture: e.g., Cuvillies' Falkenlust, Château de Bruhl and Blondel's Maison Cramer in Coligny (Hauteceur, Vol. III, 87, Fig. 66, and 101, Fig. 73).

³¹Cf., however, Henry Austin's Victoria mansion, Portland, Me., called to my attention by Carroll Meeks.

³²An apt phrase of Miss Lichten's, p. 92.

³³An opinion which is shared by Robert Koch of Norwalk, but not merely out of local patriotism; see also Weeks' statement in Prominent Families of New York, p. 400. I am indebted to Koch for several photographs of the interior decoration of the second floor bedrooms. A sad post script: a visit to the mansion on Sept. 28, 1957 revealed that the building has been permitted to deteriorate considerably in the last year or two. There has been a great deal of vandalism and apparently almost all the old furniture has disappeared. Many of the rooms are now locked.

³⁴Quoted from 1873 newspaper advertisement in Lienau, p. 18.

³⁵The resolutions passed by the Stock Exchange at a meeting of Feb. 26, 1872, are cited in Holden and Laughlin (Lockwood Family, II, 491), together with others by the Danbury & Norwalk Railroad, the Pacific

Mail Steam Ship Company, New York & Eastern Railroad, and Second Avenue Railroad (*ibid.* pp. 491-94).

³⁶Quoted from 1873 newspaper advertisement.

³⁷Charles Thompson Mathews (1864-1934), architect and author of the Renaissance under the Valois, New York, 1893, best known for the Lady Chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral, was the son of second owner.

³⁸Interestingly enough, it was suggested already in 1874 (The Sentinel, Nov. 17, cited by Danenberg, p. 315) that the grounds be used as a public park and the building converted to municipal use. In 1887 there was talk of using the building for a county courthouse but Bridgeport outbid Norwalk.

³⁹George R. Brunjes, Mayor, City of Norwalk, letter of April 16, 1957. In 1950 Holden McLaughlin Associates of New York completed a preliminary survey on the cost (\$197,000) of converting the mansion for use as a city hall. Mr. Arthur C. Holden recently informed me that nothing further has been done (conversation of April 13, 1957), though the plan has the partial backing of the Norwalk Planning Commission (see site plan, "Proposed Civic Center for Veterans Memorial Park," Mark Aug. 18, 1956, p. 1, kindly forwarded to me by Robert Koch). The editorial (*ibid.*, p. 12) pleads for the preservation of the mansion and conversion to use as a community center for lectures, exhibits, etc.

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Addendum to
Lockwood-Mathews House
Veterans' Memorial Park (Southeast Corner)
Norwalk
Fairfield County
Connecticut

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